



**National Weather Service  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
U.S. Department of Commerce**

**NWS Telework Implementation Procedures  
Addendum to NOAA Telework Policy**

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**NWS TELEWORK IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES  
ADDENDUM TO NOAA TELEWORK POLICY**

The NOAA Telework Policy [hereinafter referred to as NOAA Policy] dated November 28, 2003, and disseminated January 15, 2004, incorporates any and all requirements stipulated in the Department of Commerce Telework Policy dated January 2003. The NOAA Policy provides guidance for NWS to implement a telework program.

This Addendum defines the parameters in which NWS Financial Management Centers (FMCs) may implement a telework program under the auspices of the NOAA Policy. FMCs may wish to develop their implementation procedures as an attachment to this Addendum or as bolded information under specific areas in this Addendum to further define discretionary areas.

**Sections:**

1. **INTRODUCTION:** NOAA Policy applies.
2. **BACKGROUND:** NOAA Policy applies.
3. **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:** NWS adopts in full, unless otherwise noted herein, the requirements stipulated in the NOAA Telework Policy dated November 28, 2003. NWS specific requirements, in addition to those required by the NOAA Policy, are cited where appropriate.
4. **SCOPE:** NOAA Policy applies.
5. **OFFICIAL DUTY STATION:** NOAA Policy applies. NWS adds:

Official duty station determination must be consistent with the law and OPM. FMCs shall consider the following when establishing schedules:

OPM requirements state that, "for an employee who teleworks from an alternate worksite, an agency may designate the employee's official duty station as the location of the employee's main or reporting office, as long as he or she regularly commutes into that office at least once a week. The agency must change the employee's official duty station to the location of the telework location (i.e., the location of his/her home, telework center, or other alternate worksite) if the employee does not commute into the main or reporting office, except in certain temporary situations."

Further, OPM states, "in certain temporary situations, an agency may designate the location of the main or reporting office as the station of an employee who teleworks on a regular basis at an alternate worksite, such as when an employee recovering from an injury or medical condition that prevents the employee from regularly commuting to the worksite."

Changing the location of an employee's duty station may affect the employees pay rate and travel benefits (additional information is available at website:

<http://www.opm.gov/oca/pay/html/factindx.asp>

6. **EFFECTIVE DATE:** NWS Telework Implementation Procedures, Addendum to NOAA Policy, is effective upon approval by the NOAA Human Resources Management Office as shown on the cover. NWS FMCs have 90 days from the effective date of this Addendum to rescind their current flexiplace program and transition to the Telework Program.

7. **PROGRAM OVERSIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** NOAA Policy applies. NWS adds:

**NWS Assistant Administrator:** The NWS Assistant Administrator delegates responsibility to the NWS Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer (CFO/CAO) for the development, administration, operation, and evaluation of the NWS Telework Program.

**NWS FMC Directors:** The NWS FMC Directors or their designees are designated as the official to approve, disapprove, modify and/or terminate telework agreements. FMC Directors are responsible for administering the telework program in their respective organizations, including the authorization and expenditure of funds; ensuring compliance with all applicable policies and procedures; approving identified positions suitable/not suitable for telework and determining equipment requirements at the alternative worksite. FMC Directors are also responsible for designating a telework focal point within their FMC and providing the name of the individual to the NWS Telework Program Manager, CFO3.

**NWS Telework Program Manager:** The NWS Telework Program Manager, CFO3, is responsible for NWS-wide oversight of the NWS Telework Program and provides NWS reporting data, as needed, to the NOAA Telework Coordinator for inclusion in NOAA-wide reporting requirements, mandated by the Department. The Telework Program Manager ensures FMC/Staff Office Director consistency and compliance with established NWS guidelines and is lead for the Telework Focal Points in resolving training and implementation issues. The Telework Program Manager is responsible for receiving/notifying NWS CFO/CAO senior management of any impending Union issues raised prior to or during the implementation of the NWS telework program.

**NWS FMC Telework Focal Points:** The NWS FMC Telework Focal Points are responsible for providing telework guidance to the FMC; ensuring that FMC employees are properly briefed and trained on the NOAA Policy and NWS Telework Implementation Procedures, and evaluating the FMCs telework program and reporting results to the NWS Telework Program Manager; maintaining records of employees' telecenter usage, and consulting with the NWS Telework Program Manager for telework guidance to ensure consistency and compliance with established NWS guidelines.

8. **POLICY:** NOAA Policy applies. NWS adds:

**Telework Implementing Procedures:** NWS' Telework Implementation Procedures are in compliance with requirements specified in the NOAA Policy. NWS' policy is to allow for 100% eligible employees to work at sites away from their official workplaces during all or a portion of their regular workweek. FMCs may establish work schedules that allow for the teleworker to work all, or a specified number of days, of the pay period at the alternative work site, as appropriate, based on mission requirements and criteria established within the NOAA Policy. [Refer to Section 5. Official Duty Station when establishing schedules]

**Labor Management Relations:** The National Weather Service Employees Organization (NWSEO) was consulted in the development of this Addendum. No further action is necessary by NWS FMCs.

**Benefits Derived from Telework:** Telework benefits NWS as a tool to attract and retain a high-quality workforce, accommodate employees with disabilities or medical problems who are otherwise able to work, possibly reduce office space, capitalize on peak productivity periods, add flexibility in coordinating work priorities with personal and family responsibilities, and allows NWS responsiveness in Continuity of Operations situations.

9. **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:** NOAA Policy applies. NWS adds:

The NWS Telework Program Manager will initiate the request for reporting requirements to NWS Telework Focal Points as required.

10. **IDENTIFYING JOBS AND DUTIES SUITED FOR TELEWORK:** The NOAA policy identifies generic functions, duties suitable/not suitable for telework. However, in April 2001, the Management and Organization Division, CFO3, in consultation with NWSEO, established the following criteria for NWS use in evaluating and/or determining position suitability for telework. Supervisors shall share the results of the position analysis with all employees.

FMCs will apply this criteria in determining functions, duties, and tasks of positions suitable/not suitable for telework.

A. Telecommuting may be feasible for:

- 1) work that requires thinking and writing
  - \* data analysis
  - \* reviewing or writing reports, plans, procedures, policies
  - \* research information
  - \* following up on studies
- 2) work that requires telephone intensive tasks:
  - \* setting up conferences
  - \* interviewing people over the phone

- 3) work that is computer-orientated intensive tasks:
    - \* programming
    - \* data entry
    - \* word processing
  - 4) Round-the-clock operational positions may be suitable for special projects and under special conditions.
- B. Telecommuting may not be feasible for:
- \* work requiring extensive face-to-face contact with the supervisor/public
  - \* work requiring frequent access to materials not to be removed from the building
  - \* work requiring special equipment or facilities located only in the building
  - \* work requiring security too costly to provide outside the building
11. **SELECTING TELEWORK PARTICIPANTS:** The NOAA Policy applies for basic eligibility. NWS FMCs may also use the additional factors cited in the NOAA policy as additional criteria in determining whether telework is appropriate: Conduct, Supervision, Organization and Time Management Skills, Contact with Others, Immovable Material, Facilities and Equipment, and Other. However, the additional factors, if any, must be identified as selection factors in the NWS FMCs telework implementation procedures.
  12. **AUTHORIZED TELEWORK ARRANGEMENTS:** NOAA Policy applies.
  13. **TELEWORK AGREEMENTS:** NOAA Policy applies. NWS, in consultation with NWSEO adds the following guidance:

NWS' managers and supervisors will rely on the employee's completed Self-certification Safety Checklist and will not inspect the alternative worksite.

FMC Directors or designees will require participating employees and supervisors to complete the NOAA web-based Telework Certification Program at <http://www.rdc.noaa.gov/~hrmo/telwk-welcome.htm> prior to beginning a telework agreement.

For employees who telework on an intermittent basis, a separate agreement for each telework episode is not necessary if the employee has signed an agreement to telework on an intermittent basis. However, each incident of telework must have advance supervisory approval. Some suggested methods for advanced notification are: email, telephone, fax, memorandum, or telework T/A worksheet.
  14. **ESTABLISHING THE WORK SCHEDULE:** NOAA Policy applies. NWS adds:

FMCs may establish work schedules that allow for the teleworker to work all, or a specified number of days, of the pay period at the alternative work site, as appropriate, based on FMCs mission requirements and criteria established within the NOAA Policy.

FMCs may allow for establishing work schedules at the alternative work site that *do not* parallel regular work schedules for the traditional office environment, in accordance with established guidance in NWS Instruction 1-702 dated 10/6/03, the DOC Handbook on Hours of Duty and Leave Administration, and the NWS-NWSEO Collective Bargaining Agreement. Any such schedules must be established with approval of appropriate supervisor. [Refer to Section 5. Official Duty Station when establishing schedules]

15. **HOURS OF DUTY, TIME AND ATTENDANCE, PAY AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES:** NOAA Policy applies. NWS adds:

**Hours of Duty:** FMCs may allow for establishing work schedules at the alternative work site that do not parallel regular work schedules for the traditional office environment, in accordance with established guidance in NWS Instruction 1-702 dated 10/6/03, the DOC Handbook on Hours of Duty and Leave Administration, and the NWS-NWSEO Collective Bargaining Agreement. All work schedules must be established and approved by the appropriate supervisory official.

**Certification and Control of Time and Attendance:** FMCs shall have in place procedures allowing for proper monitoring and certification of teleworkers' time working to ensure that teleworkers are only paid for work performed and absences are properly accounted for. Refer to <http://ohrm.doc.gov/information/handbook/handbook.htm> for additional information. Some methods for monitoring are: determining reasonableness of work output for time spent, occasional supervisory telephone calls or emails to an employee during times the employee is scheduled to be on duty. NWS will not use the last method listed in the NOAA Policy, "occasional visits by the supervisor to the employee's alternative worksite."

**Leave:** NWS FMCs shall require telework participants to adhere to established leave procedures and request leave in accordance with standard office procedures.

**Emergency Conditions:** NOAA Policy applies, with NWS amplification:

Although a variety of circumstances may affect individual situations, the principles governing administrative leave, dismissals, and closings remain unchanged. If the activity announces an early dismissal (e.g., due to inclement weather to allow employees to return home safely) and the employee is working at a telecenter, the employee will follow the dismissal procedures of the telecenter and inform her/his supervisor of the dismissal. If the employee is working at home when an early dismissal (e.g., due to inclement weather) is announced, the employee shall check with her/his supervisor for determination as to whether (s)he is capable of continuing work for the rest of the regularly scheduled shift. Where "Hazardous Weather Conditions," result in officially closing the regular office, refer to the NWS-NWSEO Collective Bargaining Agreement, Article 19, Section 7 for applicable determination. This policy reference applies to NWS bargaining unit and non-bargaining unit employees who are teleworking. When the activity announces an early dismissal of employees for non-emergency conditions such as on the day prior to a Federal holiday, employees who telework will be excused. When an emergency affects only the alternate workplace for a major portion of the workday, the employee is expected to report to the regular

office or request supervisory approval of annual leave, compensatory time, credit hours if on a flexible work schedule, or leave without pay. When an employee knows in advance of a situation that would preclude working at the alternate workplace, the employee must either come to the regular office or request leave.

16. **FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT:** NOAA Policy applies. NWS adds:

**Alternative Office:** NWS managers and supervisors will rely on the employee's completed Self-certification Safety Checklist (except for teleworkers utilizing telecenters) and will not inspect the alternative worksite.

**Government-owned Equipment:** Refer to NWS Information Technology Policy

**Government-owned Computer Security Issues:** Refer to NWS Information Technology Policy

**Computer Software Copyright:** Refer to NWS Information Technology Policy

**Commercial Computer Software:** Refer to NWS Information Technology Policy

**Personal Computer Equipment:** Refer to NWS Information Technology Policy

**Installation of telephone lines:** NOAA Policy applies for general guidance. NWS adds: FMCs may use appropriated funds to pay for telephone line installation and monthly service charges for telephone, cable, DSL, ISDN lines at the alternative worksite, to be used for official government business only. Employees are required to adhere to all rules and regulations governing usage of government telephone lines for personal purposes at the alternative worksite.

FMCs may issue Government calling cards for use by the teleworking employee to make long-distance telephone calls to conduct official government business. FMCs may also allow government-furnished cell phones as an additional line for the employee to conduct official business.

**Personal Expenses:** NOAA Policy applies. Refer to NWS Information Technology Policy.

**Telecenters:** NOAA Policy applies for general guidance. For additional information, FMCs should refer to <http://www.wmtc.org> for telecenter registration. FMCs will submit telecenter requests to the NWS Telework Program Manager on a quarterly basis for the succeeding quarter. The NWS Telework Program Manager will consolidate requests and forward to the NOAA Telework Coordinator to reserve seats at the appropriate telecenter. Each FMC will be notified on the number of seats allocated. Fees for the allocated telecenter seats will be billed to each FMC on a quarterly basis. All costs will be paid from each FMCs operating budget. Actual usage, including swaps, cancellations, etc., will be managed by each FMC.

17. **SECURE OPERATIONS:** NOAA Policy applies. NWS' Information Technology Policy, Section 22, further defines FMC responsibilities. NWS FMCs may use, but are not limited to, methods (such as the checklist suggested in NWS' Information Technology Policy) to have teleworkers certify that adequate physical and environmental security measures are in place to protect NOAA/NWS government records and equipment from disclosure or damage from unauthorized individuals. The security measures in place shall be annotated under the **Equipment and Supplies** section of the employees Telework Application and Agreement.

18. **PREPARING FOR THE TELEWORK ARRANGEMENT:** NOAA Policy Applies.
19. **PRIVACY ACT, SENSITIVE OR CLASSIFIED INFORMATION:** NOAA Policy Applies.  
Refer to NWS Information Technology Policy.
20. **TRAINING:** NOAA Policy applies. In addition to NOAA's web-based telework orientation training required for telework participants, FMC Telework Focal Points will receive guidance from the NWS Telework Program Manager in conducting telework briefings and training sessions for FMC supervisors and employees.
21. **OTHER ISSUES:** NOAA Policy applies.



## 22. NWS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Telework activities must be consistent with DOC/NOAA/NWS security and information technology policies referred to below and cited in this Addendum.

### 1.0 REFERENCES

- 1.1 NAO 212-13, Information Technology Security Management
- 1.2 NAO 212-14, Use of the Internet
- 1.3 Computer User's Guide For Protecting Information Resources
- 1.4 Department of Commerce Internet Use Policy
- 1.5 NOAA Policy on the Use of Internet and Electronic Mail

### 2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 Chief Information Officer - The Chief Information Officer is responsible for providing Information (IT) policies for telework and for providing the telecommunications interface to support telework staff.
- 2.2 FMC Directors - FMC Directors are responsible for administering the telework program in their respective organizations, including ensuring compliance with all applicable policies and procedures; identifying positions suitable for the telework option, and determining whether the FMC should provide equipment and software on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.3 OCIO, Headquarters Support Services, NWS Hotline - HSS and the NWS Hotline are responsible for the following when using government-furnished equipment:
  - 2.3.1 Ensure any NWS-purchased software or hardware installed on government-furnished equipment in support of telework is in accordance with software copyright laws and compatible with NWS software standards.
  - 2.3.2 Provide general oversight regarding equipment and other information and computer needs associated with telework.
  - 2.3.3 Install remote access and security software on government-furnished equipment.
  - 2.3.4 Define the appropriate data communications equipment, software and services for telework.

### 3.0 Policy

#### 3.1 Personal Computer Equipment

Employees who telework may be approved by the FMC Director and/or designee to use their personal computers and equipment for work on non-sensitive, unclassified data consistent with NWS policy.

- 3.1.1 The employee is responsible for the installation, repair, and maintenance of all personal equipment. NWS assumes no responsibility for any operating costs associated with an employee using his or her personal equipment, and residence as an alternative worksite. This includes home maintenance, insurance, and utilities.
- 3.1.2 Personal computer software and operating systems used for telework must be properly licensed. Personal computers must also meet the following criteria for use in telework:
- o Configure computers to not “remember” NOAA or NWS passwords.
  - o Do not share or reveal NOAA or NWS usernames and passwords to anyone (including family members) to prevent unauthorized access to NOAA and NWS IT systems and data.
  - o Install and configure to automatically update (at least bi-monthly), and run antivirus software on personally-owned equipment. Anti-virus software is available from NOAA.
  - o Adhere to Incident Response Guidelines if there is a security breach on a personally-owned computer, available at: <https://www.csp.noaa.gov/noaa/ncirt/index.html>.
- 3.1.3 Personal computers may be used to access secure webmail where available. Employees must contact their local IT Helpdesk or support staff to determine if secure webmail is available. Where possible, a telework employee, using a personal computer, shall use his/her own Internet Service Provider, to gain access to the internet. However, FMCs may wish to provide that access to the teleworker to be used for official government business only. [See Section 16 - Installation of telephone lines, NWS IT Policy].
- 3.1.4 Employees requesting remote access to NWS systems and networks must adhere to the NWS Remote Access Policy.
- 3.1.5 Government-furnished Equipment
- o Providing and/or installing government-furnished equipment at alternative worksites are a matter for determination by the FMC Director and/or designee.
  - o Government-furnished equipment is for official duties in accordance with applicable use policy. Family members and friends of teleworkers are not authorized to use any government-furnished equipment. The employee must return all government-furnished equipment and materials to the agency at the conclusion of teleworking arrangements or at the FMCs request.
  - o Property management of government-furnished equipment is the responsibility of the property custodian within the FMC.
  - o Teleworkers are responsible for the security of official information and for the protection of any government-furnished equipment and property.

### 3.2 Information Security

- 3.2.1 Do not store sensitive information on fixed media of portable computer devices or palm-type devices.
- 3.2.2 Do not program portable IT devices with passwords in scripts.
- 3.2.3 Acceptable options for storage and use of sensitive information are:
  - o Use removable media and password protect the media and/or files;
  - o Use removable media and encrypt the data (doing both is acceptable); do not leave the removable media in the IT device after use.
  - o Place sensitive information on controlled access cards or papers (without explicit identification of locations or system). Controlled access means the cards/papers are uniquely identified and are signed out when needed and signed back when the task is completed.
- 3.2.4 Teleworkers shall supply the security measures that will be used at the alternative worksite (see suggested measures below). These measures shall be noted, under Equipment and Supplies, in the Telework Application and Agreement between the supervisor and teleworker.

NWS managers and supervisors must ensure that the designated work space or work station of the employee has adequate physical or environmental security measures in place to protect the equipment from being accessed by unauthorized individuals. Accordingly, managers and supervisors will rely on the teleworker's completed application and agreement, safety checklist form, and completion of any required security training thereby ensuring compliance, and shall not inspect the alternative worksite.

The following measures may be addressed, but are not limited to, those mentioned below. Within the designated work area:

1. What security measures will be in effect for Privacy Act records for the handling and confidentiality of the data, if appropriate.
2. What security measures will be in effect to deny unauthorized individuals, including family members, access to the equipment and/or work area?
3. What physical security measures will be in effect in the telecommunication aspect of telework to protect unauthorized access to the system (i.e., passwords, access codes, etc.)?
4. What procedures will be in effect if the teleworker's computer needs service regarding information that is stored on magnetic media?